



Strengthening Justice and Welfare Systems for Children in Timor-Leste

End-of-project review

Summary version, May 2016

(A UNICEF / Government of Norway Project 2013-2016)

Between December 2012 and May 2016, the **Strengthening Justice and Welfare Systems for Children in Timor-Leste** project delivered solid, consistent improvements to strategy, implementation and community ownership of child protection policy at national, district and sub-district levels in Timor-Leste.

This document summarises the results of an independent review of Strengthening Justice and Welfare Systems for Children project in Timor-Leste. The review focused on identifying change for children and the corresponding value of practices and partnerships that delivered this change. The review found that the Project delivered measurable results against its five goals.

CHALLENGES OF TIMOR-LESTE'S CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEMS IN 2012



- High rates of violence against children including sexual violence
- A focus among child welfare workers on case management rather than prevention
- No curriculum, accreditation or career path for social welfare workers
- Low use of options for community-based placement of child victims
- Lengthy delays in legal and judicial systems for child victims
- Legislative and practical challenges affecting children in conflict with the law
- Low community participation in actions to prevent child abuse, violence, neglect and exploitation

PROJECT OBJECTIVE

By the end of the project, vulnerable children and families benefit from improved access to, and quality of, national and local child welfare and justice systems.

PROJECT GOALS

- Legal and policy framework pertaining to child protection compliant with international standards and the Timor-Leste context
- Enhanced access to justice for vulnerable children and their families
- National and local referral mechanisms and services established and/or strengthened for the protection of child victims of abuse, neglect, violence and exploitation, including in emergencies
- Increased knowledge of adults and children on child protection
- Enhanced monitoring of children's rights

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

UNICEF Timor-Leste, in partnership with the Government of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste (Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Social Solidarity), the Timor-Leste Commission on the Rights of the Child, NGOs ALFeLa, Pradet, Casa Vida and other local organisations in Timor-Leste.

DONOR

Royal Government of Norway

DURATION

3.5 years (December 2012 – May 2016)

COST

Approximately US\$3 million

APPROACH



POLICY

Supported the development of a legal and policy framework for child protection.



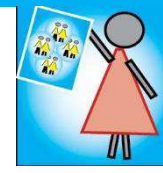
CAPACITY

Built institutional and human capacities at national and sub-national level.



SYSTEMS

National and local referral mechanisms and services for the protection of child victims of abuse, neglect, violence and exploitation.



EVIDENCE

Increased the evidence base on children's right.



ACCOUNTABILITY

Enhanced the monitoring of children's rights.



Activities contributing to POLICY:

- National Coordination Mechanism for Juvenile Justice established 2013
- Advice to national policy drafts and process
- Support and technical expertise through partner Child Frontiers to implement the Child and Family Welfare policy in three districts (Note: now it is called as municipalities): OeCusse, Dili, Viqueque
- Drafting of the National Action Plan for Juvenile Justice



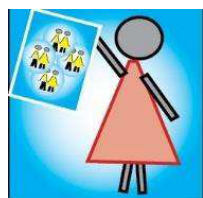
Activities contributing to CAPACITY:

- Through partner ALFeLa and directly, training student lawyers, the judiciary and village chiefs on children's rights and access to justice.
- Intensive case management training and tools for child protection officers.
- Pre-service training on child justice administration at the Judiciary Training Centre.
- Training and developing skills within the Vulnerable Persons Unit, nationally and at district levels, to respond appropriately to child abuse cases.
- Social Welfare Workforce Capacity Development and Accreditation



Activities contributing to SYSTEMS:

- Supporting sub-district (now called administration post) networks for child monitoring involving community figures (teachers, village leaders, church).
- Highlighting and supporting essential ongoing NGO services for legal aid (ALFeLa) and medical assistance (Pradet).
- Increasing the focus and resources for reintegration of child victims and children in conflict with the law.



Activities contributing to RESEARCH:

- Publication of research reports in partnership with JSMP, Child Frontiers and others.
- Supporting Timor-Leste's Commission on the Rights of the Child to advocate for greater inclusion of children's rights in other sector strategies.



Activities contributing to ACCOUNTABILITY:

- Close partnership with the Commission on the Rights of the Child on defining its role and strategy.
- Supporting government and Commissioner through the international CRC progress review, 2014/2015.
- Jointly supporting child policy process with the National Action Plan for Children in Timor-Leste 2016-2020

Review methodology

The independent review of Strengthening Justice and Welfare Systems for Children in Timor-Leste used a form of contribution analysis to understand the levels of policy and social change between 2012 and 2016, as well as the significance of UNICEF as a partner in this change.

The review gathered information and perspectives from a number of sources:

- Over 60 UNICEF and partner documents describing the last decade of context, needs and solutions of child welfare and justice in Timor-Leste.
- Interviews with nearly 30 stakeholders involved in different branches of the Project's implementation and influence.
- A 'Contribution Analysis – Process Tracing' (CA-PT) workshop bringing implementation teams together to identify the causal mechanisms behind key outcomes.
- Further enquiry with stakeholders to validate workshop results in line with the principles of process tracing.

REVIEW RESULTS

The review found:

- Strong correlation between UNICEF’s strategy for change and what had actually taken place.
- Levels of understanding and support for the Child and Family Welfare policy were high, including at sub-district levels, where the policy is most needed.
- Organisationally, UNICEF has been a valued and technically capable partner with innovation, flexibility and communication highlighted as assets by interviewees.
- UNICEF’s contribution was essential, but so were the inputs of many other government and non-government actors. Together they brought exponential effect with only a small team at UNICEF. The diagram to the right shows the theory of change for the project, validated through the review.
- **Child welfare policy change at national level, combined with locally led implementation and accountability, has potential to benefit every child in Timor-Leste.**

Not all project outputs were met in full. More work is required to ensure that progress to date is not lost in juvenile justice and crisis shelter standards and processes. The traffic light report on the next page shows key results, as well as levels of progress, within the project’s framework.

PROJECT THEORY OF CHANGE FOR IMPROVED JUSTICE AND WELFARE: HOW IT HAPPENED

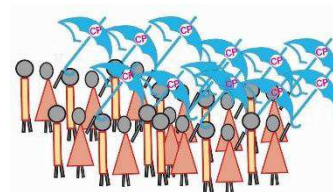
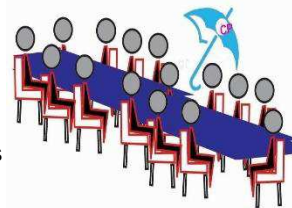
UNICEF project and technical support staff partnered with government at district and national level



and supported ALFeLa, Casa Vida, JSMP, Pradet and other child protection specialists to work nationally and locally.

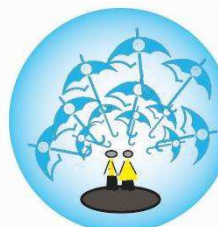


The approach built capacity in the social welfare workforce (child protection officers, gender-based violence focal points, social animators), VPU officers, lawyers and judiciary and other relevant government stakeholders



to engage suco and aldeias chefes, church leaders, teachers, youth group leaders and other community figures

to influence people in their communities to take a greater role in monitoring, preventing and responding to child abuse and exploitation.



Coordinated with the reforms of the Child and Family Welfare policy, this mobilisation will reach children and their caregivers in three districts (municipalities) by the end of 2017, and in every district (municipality) by 2024.

UNICEF’S CONTRIBUTION TO CHANGE




POLICY: UNICEF is recognised as an instrumental partner and influencer with government, supporting the removal of many ‘bottlenecks’ that had affected previous attempts to introduce meaningful, community-based child protection and violence prevention policies.

IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY: UNICEF facilitated consultative drafting and implementation of the Child and Family Welfare Policy, an approach that has been hailed for its innovation and quality. UNICEF provided strong support to integrate the policy with locally relevant traditions and interactions.

SOUND CAPACITY STRATEGIES: All partners in the child protection system acknowledge the vital role of UNICEF’s planning, training and mentorship in enhancing their own capacities and coordination.

COLLABORATIVE ADVOCACY AND ACCOUNTABILITY: UNICEF has walked closely beside the Commission on the Rights of the Child from its inception in 2009 through to its successful liaison with the UN CRC State Party Review in 2014. This has included ongoing advocacy to government on the roles of different partners in child rights and protection.

SPACE FOR COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP: UNICEF’s strengths-based focus within design and implementation of policy encouraged local contextualisation and innovation, from the social welfare workforce as well as from community-based protection networks and traditional forms of governance.

OUTCOME 1 Legal/policy framework for child protection compliant with international standards, Timor-Leste context		OUTCOME 2 Enhanced access to justice for vulnerable children and their families		OUTCOME 3 National and local referral mechanisms and services for child victims including in emergencies		OUTCOME 4 Increased knowledge of adults and children on child protection		OUTCOME 5 Enhanced monitoring of children's rights	
OUTPUT GOALS	OUTPUT ACTUAL (RESULTS)	OUTPUT GOAL	OUTPUT ACTUAL (RESULTS)	OUTPUT GOAL	OUTPUT ACTUAL (RESULTS)	OUTPUT GOAL	OUTPUT ACTUAL (RESULTS)	OUTPUT GOAL	OUTPUT ACTUAL (RESULTS)
<p>1</p> <p>Child and Family Welfare Policy developed and implemented</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFW implementing from 2015 • Formally approved by MSS in 2016 		<p>3</p> <p>Child and women victims of violence provided with legal assistance</p> <p>Through ALFeLa:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 1000 women and children received legal assistance • 168 child abuse cases were prosecuted. 		<p>5</p> <p>78 Child Protection Networks fully functioning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependent on CFW implementation • At least 34 Child Protection Networks (45% of target) in place to varying degrees. 		<p>10</p> <p>CP socialisation for children, parents, teachers, health workers, community leaders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scaled sensitisation postponed to align with CFW. • Thousands attended UN CRC events. 		<p>11</p> <p>State Party Report on CRC, optional protocols and NAP for follow-up.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission on the Rights of the Child successful at UN CRC 2014 • National Action Plan (NAP) for Children in Timor-Leste 2016-2019, approved by MECAS in 2016 	
<p>2</p> <p>Juvenile Justice framework established</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two policies at final draft, awaiting ministry despatch • Ministry of Justice National Action Plan on Juvenile Justice ready to implement 		<p>4</p> <p>200 police, 50 judicial authorities trained on child-friendly procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained 80 police, 91 judges and lawyers including students • <i>Curriculum, 'Children and Administration of Justice', now with Legal Training Centre</i> 		<p>6</p> <p>26 Social Welfare Officers completed capacity development programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All members of formal social welfare workforce (26 Child Protection Officers, around 70 sub-district Social Animators, GBV focal points) attended professional training. 				<p>12</p> <p>Commission on the Rights of the Child effectively monitors State performance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission has demonstrated capacity and value, but structure within govt. limits full accountability monitoring. 	
				<p>7</p> <p>CP Working Group / CP in Emergencies sub-Cluster members trained on CP in emergencies.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained all relevant national/sub-national stakeholders • Child protection included in Protection Cluster for emergency response 			
				<p>8</p> <p>Staff of 59 children's residential care facilities trained on CP</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not a primary activity for the project; not all shelters reached as planned. 			
				<p>9</p> <p>On-the-spot and outreach counselling services for vulnerable children and families in Dili</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships required to fulfil this output started later, and had fewer requirements from UNICEF, than expected. Low relevance to project results. 			
<p> Fully achieved</p> <p> Partially achieved</p> <p> Not achieved</p>	<p>CP Child Protection</p> <p>CFW Child and Family Welfare (policy)</p>								

<p>HOW DID OUTCOMES TAKE PLACE?</p> <p><i>Causal mapping of Strengthening Justice and Welfare Systems for Children in Timor-Leste</i></p> <p>The six case studies on this page were generated during the end-of-project review's contribution analysis workshop in May 2016. At this event, implementing partners worked together to map <i>causes of the project's main outcomes</i>.</p> <p>The examples of change show the role of UNICEF alongside other important actors, events and influences, and explain how change comes about in the Timor-Leste context.</p> <p>More detail on each case, as well as the methodology used to generate and validate the cases, is available in the full end-of-project review report.</p>	<p>JUVENILE JUSTICE OUTCOME</p> <p>Clarifying parameters of culpability, detention and rehabilitation for children in conflict with the law has been on the policy agenda for Timor-Leste for at least a decade. One of the first project activities was to support forming the Juvenile Justice Steering Committee in 2012/2013. The committee, including representatives from UNICEF, government, the Commission on the Rights of the Child and JSMP, advocated to the Ministry of Justice to redraft a former, unpassed Juvenile Justice Law. A government study tour to New Zealand to explore alternative juvenile case management resulted in renewed efforts to pass the revised law, now presented as two formal legal drafts, the Special Regime for Youth aged 16-21 and the Tutelary Educative for Minors for children aged 12 – 15 years old. The drafts are finalised, with formal signoff pending as of July 2016.</p>	<p>WELFARE POLICY OUTCOME</p> <p>Knowing that child protection begins with the family, the Ministry of Social Solidarity, the Commissioner on the Rights of the Child and UNICEF began working on the Child and Family Welfare (CFW) policy in 2012. The process of drafting the CFW was consultative, based on existing community assets that could bring greater harmony and security to families. Though many have collaborated on the policy and its implementation planning, the primary partnership has been between the Ministry for Social Solidarity and consultants Child Frontiers, connected to the project through UNICEF since late 2013. Enthusiasm for the policy and commitment to its implementation including budget, even before it was formally approved, illustrate the value and flexibility of policy rooted in local level actions.</p>
	<p>SYSTEMIC RESPONSE OUTCOME</p> <p>Reporting and prosecution of violence and abuse, including sexual abuse, against children in Timor-Leste has been minimal compared to suspected cases. The project supported newly formed legal aid NGO ALFeLa to train student lawyers, the judiciary, police and the Vulnerable Persons' Unit (a police division) on legal rights and process for victims of child abuse. Government welfare officers (social animators) began to include these messages in their child rights awareness campaigns, while intensive case management training for district child protection officers helped them coordinate children's cases more effectively. In 2013, ALFeLa handled just over 200 cases. By 2015 it was over 500, with around 25% involving children.</p>	<p>RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE OUTCOME</p> <p>Prior to 2012, though referral systems were strengthening, the usual practice for protection of child victims was removal from the community and the added trauma of facing the perpetrator. Project messaging highlighted the need to think about the best interests of the child, which often includes family or kinship care of children at risk rather than institutions. In addition, noting the lack of follow-up monitoring for children who are removed and then return home, child protection officers engaged community-based monitors and mentors to support the reintegration process and the child's welfare long-term. Several child protection officers reported increased satisfaction with their own roles, and with the level of care and support children received as a result of these process changes.</p>
	<p>PREVENTION OUTCOME</p> <p>In 2012, MSS increased the number of child protection officers per district (municipality) from one to two, and UNICEF facilitated intensive case management training for all teams, including the Gender Based Violence Focal Points recruited by the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MSS) with support from UNFPA. These personnel were at the heart of sub-district (administration post) networks linking line ministries and the social welfare workforce to community-based protection volunteers including village chiefs, teachers, church and other appropriate and respected figures. The project provided start-up equipment and guidance for networks in three districts (municipalities) in 2013, but the networks faced challenges of sustainability and the decision was taken to hold off on expansion until the Child and Family Welfare policy was ready. Repeating the model in 2015/2016, with the added foundations of government policy, formal training and MSS commitment to fund long-term, appears to be more successful.</p>	<p>MULTI SECTOR ACCOUNTABILITY OUTCOME</p> <p>The UN CRC State Party Reporting Cycle in 2014 was the second for Timor-Leste and the first with the national Commission on the Rights of the Child in place. The Commission has been building its strengths in advocacy and advisory status, including a revised strategy for ministry engagement covering the period 2015-2019, supported by technical advice from the UNICEF Project. The Project also helped to coordinate the process and presentation for the Geneva-based review, including a side trip to Oslo for government observers to learn more about the importance and structure of an independent Commissioner role. Increased interest as a result of this visit contributed to the 2015 drafting of a cross-sector child rights plan, now renamed as the National Action Plan for Children in Timor-Leste 2016-2019, which was approved by Ministry of State, Coordination of Social Affairs (MECAS) in 2016.</p>

JUSTICE AND WELFARE SYSTEMS IN ACTION: JULIANA'S STORY

Juliana, aged 13, was teased for being a slow learner at school. Eventually she began to stay at home instead, often unsupervised during the day. In early 2016, Juliana's mother came home during the day and found an extended family member sexually abusing her.



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In shock at the discovery, Juliana's mother ran to the local nuns for advice. They knew to refer her to the VPU and district Child Protection Officer, who responded quickly to report the case and arrest Juliana's attacker. Though Juliana remembers being initially terrified of the police, she says the feeling did not last long due to their kindness and respect towards her. The team handling the case could also see how important it was for Juliana to return home to familiar and loving caregivers. While Juliana stayed in emergency care – one night in a crisis shelter, and after that with the nuns who had originally advised her mother – the assigned Child Protection Officer busied himself with enquiries on the protection and monitoring support available in Juliana's family and neighbours. He discovered there was strong commitment to help Juliana recover, and she returned to live with her family in less than a week.

The case threw a previously close family into crisis, a situation which in the past would have made it very difficult to continue towards prosecution. However, the case occurred in a Child and Family Welfare Policy pilot district, which allowed dual legal provisions: traditional mediation to restore family peace and Juliana's dignity at home, as well as the punitive and deterrent justice of a formal trial.

With ongoing support and encouragement from her Child Protection Officer, Juliana is now ready to return to school and put the ordeal behind her.

Juliana's name has been changed to protect her identity.

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS, END-OF-PROJECT REVIEW

FOR GOVERNMENT	FOR PARTNERS	FOR UNICEF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the Commission on the Rights of the Child on monitoring UN CRC protection recommendations. • Accelerate judiciary process for assessing child cases. • Pass the draft laws on juvenile justice. • Accreditation and civil service registration of social welfare workforce. • Expand short-term reach and capacity of ALFeLa and Pradet as crisis responder NGOs in the face of increased reporting. • Budget long-term for Child and Family Welfare Policy and Parenting Education Programme as prevention strategies. • Monitor trends and responses for children in contact with the law; move towards diversion and prevention for children at risk. • Provide additional roles in child protection and welfare per the Child and Family Welfare Human Resource Strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure continuation and strengthening of Juvenile Justice to lobby including expertise on alternatives to detention. • Involve crisis shelters and church welfare resources more closely in strategies around the best interests of the child. • Continue to build data and evidence on gaps in Timor-Leste's child abuse protection and prevention; as the situation improves, vulnerabilities are likely to be changing. • Take up opportunities through UNICEF and others for regular joint reflection and learning about child protection systems, their effectiveness and their outcomes for children and families. • Explore issues of sustainability and accountability for legal aid and forensic health services, currently provided in full by the NGOs ALFeLa and Pradet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide technical support to Child and Family Welfare (CFW) Policy budgeting process at national and district levels. • Continue to monitor and advise on CFW implementation in line with the planned long-term rollout. • Commission further research on needs-based allocation of services, and use this information to advocate with government for increased human and financial resources to reach Timor-Leste's most vulnerable areas. • Continue sensitisation work among justice workers (prisons, judiciary, police) about the rights of children in contact with the law. • Expand advocacy on the best interests of the child with a focus on community-based care. • Continue highly valued capacity building and mentoring activities for child protection workforce (Vulnerable Persons' Unit, Ministry of Social Solidarity welfare staff).

Cover photo: A child playing in Timor-Leste. © UNICEF Timor-Leste/2015/Abernardino

The end-of-project review of 'Strengthening Justice and Welfare Systems for Children in Timor-Leste' was commissioned by UNICEF Timor-Leste and conducted by independent consultancy Chalk It Up.

UNICEF and partners gratefully acknowledge the support of the Royal Government of Norway to the project as part of a valued broader strategy for children since 2005.

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